NHS
Sussex Community
NHS Foundation Trust

Sciatica

Rehabilitation exercises

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Content List

Knee rolls

Lying on your back with your knees bent, slowly drop your legs to one side and hold the stretch for 5 seconds. Come back to the middle and switch sides. You should feel the stretch in your back on the opposite side that your legs are leaning. Repeat for 30 seconds. The goal is to do 3-5 sets.

Privacy - Terms

Knee roll demonstration

Knee hugs

While lying on your back, bend and raise up your knees. Then use your hands to pull your knees to your chest. Hold this position for 20/30 seconds. Repeat the exercise 3-5 times.

Knee hug demonstration

Cow-cat stretch

On your hands and knees, start by arching the mid-back upwards towards the ceiling. Then reverse the position by rotating the pelvis and increasing the arch within the lower back. Repeat the exercise for 30 seconds. The goal is to do 3-5 sets.

Cow-catch demonstration

Child's pose

Start in a kneeling position then lower your upper body towards the ground until your forehead is resting or touching the floor. Your arms should be above your head with your palms flat on the floor. Hold this stretch for 10 seconds and repeat for 30 seconds. The aim is to do 3-5 sets.

Child's pose demonstration

Bridge

While lying on your back, knees bent and feet flat on the floor, tighten your lower abdominals, squeeze your buttocks and then raise your buttocks off the floor or bed as creating a 'bridge' with your body. Hold for 5 seconds and then lower yourself and repeat for 30 seconds. The goal is to do 3-5 sets.

Bridge demonstration

Lumbar flexion

Standing with feet shoulder width apart. Slowly roll/bend forward and slide your hands down your legs, towards your feet, until you feel a stretch in your lower back. Hold this stretch for 5-1o seconds before returning to standing. Repeat the exercise 3-5 times.

Lumbar flexion demonstration

Side bend

Standing with feet shoulder width apart and hands by your side. Slowly move one hand down your leg towards your knee. You should feel stretch in your opposite site. Hold this stretch for 20-30 seconds before returning to standing. Repeat the exercise 3-5 times.

Side bend demonstration

Marching on spot

Start in a standing position, march in place lifting knees up to a comfortable level, at a pace that you can control with good balance. Do 3 sets of 30 seconds each.

Marching on the spot demonstration

Arm raises

Standing with feet shoulder width apart, arms by your sides your palms facing inwards. Raise your arm infront of you keeping it straight. Go as far as you can with the aim to get your arm inline with your head before gently lowering to the start position. Repeat for 30 seconds. The aim is to do 3-5 sets.

Arm raise demonstration

Exercise dose

- little and often 1-2/day as able
- only perform as pain allows
- increase as you feel able

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